

**PROGRAM POLICY COORDINATION WORKGROUP
MINUTES
August 14, 2003
GEF III, Room 041**

Attendees

Shirin Cabraal, LAW
Monica Danley, Milwaukee Co. DHS
Sara Edmonds, DHFS/DHCF/BHCE
Jon Janowski, MHTF
Kathy Judd, Dane Co. DHS
John LaPhillip, DHFS/DHCF/BHCE

Mike McKenzie, DHFS/DHCF/BHCE
Carol Medaris, WCCF
Michelle Pauser, DHFS
Linda Preysz, DWD
Sheryl Siegl (minute-taker),
Winnebago Co. DHS

Guest Speaker

Jim Jones

Jim Jones was a “guest speaker” today, so we moved him up on the agenda. Jim presented a short history on the proposal for centralization of application processing and the subsequent discussion with the IMAC counties. An ad hoc committee had been created which came up with an alternate proposal. This proposal reduced the IM allocations to an average of 11% in the first year and 7% in the second, as opposed to the initial 25% reduction proposal. The agreed-upon proposal also left application processing with the counties. Other workload reduction initiatives were developed, and Jim provided a handout indicating what those are. This is an update to the one we’d received previously. Jim stated that DHFS is trying to get eligibility workers out of concentrating on data entry and systems. Instead, they want to see eligibility workers be able to focus more on customer service.

Jim then provided a handout of a Powerpoint on Food Stamp Outreach, the FS Participation Grant, and the SSI Combined Application project. Jim added that outreach will be an ongoing effort, not limited to this initiative. Linda indicated that new or repeat UI claimants receive information packets, and that DHFS could add information on Food Stamps to this packet. Jim will follow up on this.

Committee Members

Mike McKenzie

Mike provided the group with a membership list and asked if there were other agencies that ought to be represented, given that this committee will be reviewing the ongoing process of the outreach/participation grant project. Suggestions were made to add representatives from CWAG, WIC and TEFAP agencies, Benefit Specialists (from Commission on Aging) and a bi-lingual/bi-cultural representative. Mike will make contacts with WIC/TEFAP and with a Milwaukee County bi-lingual worker. Shirin will contact CWAG. We felt we could hold off for now on adding a Benefit Specialist.

We also reviewed the current list to determine who should no longer be listed. The following have indicated that they will no longer be regular members: Brian Fangmeier; Amy Mendel-Clemens (but Michelle is replacing her on this committee, representing the Call Center staff), Diane Northrup, Rick Zynda, and Jayne Wanless. Jon will contact Beth Smith to see if she is planning to continue.

Minutes from 7/10/03 Meeting and Charter

Mike McKenzie

Minutes from the last meeting were reviewed. Shirin commented on how helpful the Farm Bill summary will be. Mike reviewed the charter developed at our last meeting, indicating that he'd made one small typo, which has been corrected. Carol asked for clarification about Option 1 of the Transitional Food Stamp section. Sara clarified it for her.

HIPAA Rules Clarification

John LaPhilliph

Regarding HIPAA, we were referred to Ops Memo 03-06, which essentially exempts Income Maintenance staff from HIPAA requirements. Shirin asked if community advocate agencies such as Milwaukee's Med Line can call EDS or the county to obtain eligibility information for a client. Usually this is done via telephone and there's no face-to-face contact with the client, so no release of information form can be signed. Or could an agency contract with EDS for the information? John LaPhilliph said he'd look into this, but HIPAA is very rigid about EDS information. Even demographic information is considered confidential. Many local agencies fall under their county HIPAA-related policies, even if the IM division is exempt from Federal requirements. In addition, the Income Maintenance Manual prohibits release of information unless the client has signed a release form, except in specific circumstances.

Next Meeting Agenda

Topics for the next meeting were solicited. Shirin asked about incorrect deeming rules in the FS Handbook. Mike asked her to email the errors to him. Monica mentioned that the FS standard utility deduction is now lower than many people's actual utility obligation. Mike stated that this is reviewed annually and will change in October.

Next meeting is September 11, 2003, GEF III, Room 349, 12:30-3:00.